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12
13 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE**
14 **CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

15 L.C., a minor by and through her
16 guardian *ad litem* Maria Cadena,
17 individually and as successor-in-interest
18 to Hector Puga; I.H., a minor by and
19 through his guardian *ad litem* Jasmine
20 Hernandez, individually and as
21 successor-in-interest to Hector Puga;
22 A.L., a minor by and through her
23 guardian *ad litem* Lydia Lopez,
24 individually and as successor-in-interest
25 to Hector Puga; and ANTONIA SALAS
26 UBALDO, individually;

Case No. 5:22-cv-00949-KK-SHK

Honorable Kenly Kiya Kato

27 **PLAINTIFFS' PROPOSED JURY**
28 **INSTRUCTIONS**

19 Plaintiffs,

20 vs.

21 STATE OF CALIFORNIA; COUNTY
22 OF SAN BERNARDINO; S.S.C., a
23 nominal defendant; ISAIAH KEE;
24 MICHAEL BLACKWOOD;
25 BERNARDO RUBALCAVA; ROBERT
VACCARI; JAKE ADAMS; and DOES
6-10, inclusive,

26 Defendants.

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 1**

2 **Duty of Jury**

3 Members of the jury: You are now the jury in this case. It is my duty to
4 inform you of the law.

5 It is your duty to find the facts from all the evidence in the case. To those
6 facts you will apply the law as I give it to you. You must follow the law as I give it
7 to you whether you agree with it or not. And you must not be influenced by any
8 personal likes or dislikes, opinions, prejudices, or sympathy. That means you must
9 decide the case solely on the evidence before you. You will recall that you took an
10 oath to do so.

11 At the end of trial I will give you final instructions. It is the final instructions
12 that will govern your duties.

13 Please do not read into these instructions, or anything I may say or do, that I
14 have an opinion regarding the evidence or what your verdict should be.

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16 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.3
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COURT'S INSTRUCTION NO. 3

Burden of Proof – Preponderance of the Evidence

When a party has the burden of proof on any claim by a preponderance of evidence, it means you must be persuaded by the evidence that the claim is more probably true than not true.

6 You should base your decision on all of the evidence, regardless of which
7 party presented it.

9 | Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Civil Jury Instructions, No. 1.6.

1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 4**

2 Two or More Parties—Different Legal Rights

3 You should decide the case as to each party separately. Unless otherwise
4 stated, the instructions apply to all parties.

5 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Civil Jury Instructions, No. 1.8

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 5**

2 What is Evidence

3 The evidence you are to consider in deciding what facts are consists of:

4 1. the sworn testimony of any witness;

5 2. the exhibits which are admitted into evidence;

6 3. any facts to which the lawyers have agreed; and

7 4. any facts that I may instruct you to accept as proved.

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9 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Civil Jury Instructions, No. 1.9

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INSTRUCTION NO. 6

What is Not Evidence

In reaching your verdict, you may consider only the testimony and exhibits received into evidence. Certain things are not evidence, and you may not consider them in deciding what the facts are. I will list them for you:

- (1) Arguments and statements by lawyers are not evidence. The lawyers are not witnesses. What they have said in their opening statements, closing arguments, and at other times is intended to help you interpret the evidence, but it is not evidence. If the facts as you remember them differ from the way the lawyers have stated them, your memory of them controls.
- (2) Questions and objections by lawyers are not evidence. Attorneys have a duty to their clients to object when they believe a question is improper under the rules of evidence. You should not be influenced by the objection or by the court's ruling on it.
- (3) Testimony that has been excluded or stricken, or that you have been instructed to disregard, is not evidence and must not be considered. In addition some evidence was received only for a limited purpose; when I have instructed you to consider certain evidence only for a limited purpose, you must do so and you may not consider that evidence for any other purpose.
- (4) Anything you may have seen or heard when the court was not in session is not evidence. You are to decide the case solely on the evidence received at the trial.

Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.10.

1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 7**

2 Evidence for a Limited Purpose

3 Some evidence may be admitted only for a limited purpose.

4 When I instruct you that an item of evidence has been admitted for a limited
5 purpose, you must consider it only for that limited purpose and not for any other
6 purpose.

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8 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.11.

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 8**

2 Direct and Circumstantial Evidence

3 Evidence may be direct or circumstantial. Direct evidence is direct proof of a
4 fact, such as testimony by a witness about what that witness personally saw or heard
5 or did. Circumstantial evidence is proof of one or more facts from which you could
6 find another fact. You should consider both kinds of evidence. The law makes no
7 distinction between the weight to be given to either direct or circumstantial
8 evidence. It is for you to decide how much weight to give to any evidence.

9 By way of example, if you wake up in the morning and see that the sidewalk
10 is wet, you may find from that fact that it rained during the night. However, other
11 evidence, such as a turned on garden hose, may provide a different explanation for
12 the presence of water on the sidewalk. Therefore, before you decide that a fact has
13 been proved by circumstantial evidence, you must consider all the evidence in the
14 light of reason, experience, and common sense.

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16 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.12.

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 9**

2 Ruling on Objections

3 There are rules of evidence that control what can be received into evidence.
4 When a lawyer asked a question or offered an exhibit into evidence and a lawyer on
5 the other side thought that it was not permitted by the rules of evidence, that lawyer
6 may have objected. If I overruled the objection, the question may have been
7 answered or the exhibit received. If I sustained the objection, the question could not
8 be answered, and the exhibit could not be received. Whenever I sustained an
9 objection to a question, you must ignore the question and must not guess what the
10 answer might have been.

11 Sometimes I may have ordered that evidence be stricken from the record and
12 that you disregard or ignore the evidence. That means that when you are deciding
13 the case, you must not consider the stricken evidence for any purpose.

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15 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.13

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 10**

2 Credibility of Witnesses

3 In deciding the facts in this case, you may have to decide which testimony to
4 believe and which testimony not to believe. You may believe everything a witness
5 says, or part of it, or none of it.

6 In considering the testimony of any witness, you may take into account:

7 (1) the opportunity and ability of the witness to see or hear or know the
8 things testified to;

9 (2) the witness's memory;

10 (3) the witness's manner while testifying;

11 (4) the witness's interest in the outcome of the case, if any;

12 (5) the witness's bias or prejudice, if any;

13 (6) whether other evidence contradicted the witness's testimony;

14 (7) the reasonableness of the witness's testimony in light of all the
15 evidence; and

16 (8) any other factors that bear on believability.

17 Sometimes a witness may say something that is not consistent with something
18 else he or she said. Sometimes different witnesses will give different versions of
19 what happened. People often forget things or make mistakes in what they remember.
20 Also, two people may see the same event but remember it differently. You may
21 consider these differences, but do not decide that testimony is untrue just because it
22 differs from other testimony.

23 However, if you decide that a witness has deliberately testified untruthfully
24 about something important, you may choose not to believe anything that witness
25 said. On the other hand, if you think the witness testified untruthfully about some
26 things but told the truth about others, you may accept the part you think is true and
27 ignore the rest.

1 The weight of the evidence as to a fact does not necessarily depend on the
2 number of witnesses who testify. What is important is how believable the witnesses
3 were, and how much weight you think their testimony deserves.

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5 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.14.

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1 **PROPOSED INSTRUCTION NO. 11**

2 Conduct of the Jury

3 I will now say a few words about your conduct as jurors.

4 First, keep an open mind throughout the trial, and do not decide what the
5 verdict should be until you and your fellow jurors have completed your deliberations
6 at the end of the case.

7 Second, because you must decide this case based only on the evidence
8 received in the case and on my instructions as to the law that applies, you must not
9 be exposed to any other information about the case or to the issues it involves during
10 the course of your jury duty. Thus, until the end of the case or unless I tell you
11 otherwise:

12 Do not communicate with anyone in any way and do not let anyone else
13 communicate with you in any way about the merits of the case or anything to do
14 with it. This includes discussing the case in person, in writing, by phone or
15 electronic means, via e-mail, text messaging, or any internet chat room, blog,
16 website or application, including but not limited to Facebook, YouTube, Twitter,
17 Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, or any other forms of social media. This applies to
18 communicating with your fellow jurors until I give you the case for deliberation, and
19 it applies to communicating with everyone else including your family members,
20 your employer, the media or press, and the people involved in the trial, although you
21 may notify your family and your employer that you have been seated as a juror in
22 the case and how long you expect the trial to last. But, if you are asked or
23 approached in any way about your jury service or anything about this case, you must
24 respond that you have been ordered not to discuss the matter and to report the
25 contact to the court.

26 Because you will receive all the evidence and legal instruction you properly
27 may consider to return a verdict: do not read, watch, or listen to any news or media
28 accounts or commentary about the case or anything to do with it; do not do any

1 research, such as consulting dictionaries, searching the Internet or using other
2 reference materials; and do not make any investigation or in any other way try to
3 learn about the case on your own. Do not visit or view any place discussed in this
4 case, and do not use Internet programs or other devices to search for or view any
5 place discussed during the trial. Also, do not do any research about this case, the
6 law, or the people involved – including the parties, the witnesses or the lawyers –
7 until you have been excused as jurors. If you happen to read or hear anything
8 touching on this case in the media, turn away and report it to me as soon as possible.

9 These rules protect each party's right to have this case decided only on the
10 evidence that has been presented here in court. Witnesses here in court take an oath
11 to tell the truth, and the accuracy of their testimony is tested throughout the trial
12 process. If you do any research or investigation outside the courtroom, or gain any
13 information through improper communications, then your verdict may be influenced
14 by inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information that has not been tested by the
15 trial process. Each of the parties is entitled to a fair trial but an impartial jury, and if
16 you decide the case based on the information not presented in court, you will have
17 denied the parties a fair trial. Remember, you have taken an oath to follow the rules,
18 and it is very important that you follow these rules.

19 A juror who violates these restrictions jeopardizes the fairness of these
20 proceedings. If any juror is exposed to any outside information, please notify the
21 court immediately.

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23 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.15
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1 **PROPOSED INSTRUCTION NO. 12**

2 No Transcript Available to Jury

3 I urge you to pay close attention to the testimony as it is given. During
4 deliberations, you will not have a transcript of the trial testimony.

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7 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.17.

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1 **PROPOSED INSTRUCTION NO. 13**

2 Taking Notes

3 If you wish, you may take notes to help you remember the evidence. If you
4 do take notes, please keep them to yourself until you and your fellow jurors go to
5 the jury room to decide the case. Do not let note-taking distract you. When you
6 leave, your notes should be left in the [courtroom] [jury room] [envelope in the jury
7 room]. No one will read your notes.

8 Whether or not you take notes, you should rely on your own memory of the
9 evidence. Notes are only to assist your memory. You should not be overly
10 influenced by your notes or those of your fellow jurors.

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12 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.18

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PROPOSED INSTRUCTION NO. 14

Bench Conferences and Recesses

3 From time to time during the trial, it may become necessary for me to talk
4 with the attorneys out of the hearing of the jury, either by having a conference at the
5 bench when the jury is present in the courtroom, or by calling a recess. Please
6 understand that while you are waiting, we are working. The purpose of these
7 conferences is not to keep relevant information from you, but to decide how certain
8 evidence is to be treated under the rules of evidence and to avoid confusion and
9 error.

10 Of course, we will do what we can to keep the number and length of these
11 conferences to a minimum. I may not always grant an attorney's request for a
12 conference. Do not consider my granting or denying a request for a conference as
13 any indication of my opinion of the case or of what your verdict should be.

15 | Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.20.

1 **PROPOSED INSTRUCTION NO. 15**

2 Outline of Trial

3 Trials proceed in the following way: First, each side may make an opening
4 statement. An opening statement is not evidence. It is simply an outline to help you
5 understand what that party expects the evidence will show. A party is not required
6 to make an opening statement.

7 The plaintiff will then present evidence, and counsel for the defendants may
8 cross-examine. Then the defendants may present evidence, and counsel for the
9 plaintiff may cross-examine.

10 After the evidence has been presented, I will instruct you on the law that
11 applies to the case and the attorneys will make closing arguments.

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13 After that, you will go to the jury room to deliberate on your verdict.

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15 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 1.21.

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 16**

2 Stipulations of Fact

3 The parties have agreed to certain facts that will be read to you. You must
4 therefore treat these facts as having been proved.

5 (1) The incident occurred on February 17, 2021.

6 (2) At all relevant times, Defendants Isaiah Kee, Bernardo Rubalcava, and
7 Michael Blackwood were acting within the course and scope of their
8 employment as police officers for the California Highway Patrol for the
9 State of California.

10 (3) At all relevant times, Defendants Isaiah Kee, Bernardo Rubalcava, and
11 Michael Blackwood were acting under color of law.

12 (4) Hector Puga sustained multiple gunshot wounds as a result of the
13 February 17, 2021 incident.

14 (5) Hector Puga died as a result of his gunshot wounds.

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16 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 2.2

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INSTRUCTION NO. 17

Expert Opinion

3 You [have heard] [are about to hear] testimony from [name] who [testified]
4 [will testify] to opinions and reasons for [his] [her] opinions. This opinion testimony
5 is allowed, because of the education or experience of this witness.

Such opinion testimony should be judged like any other testimony. You may accept or reject it, and give it as much weight as you think it deserves, considering the witness's education and experience, the reasons for the opinion, and all the other evidence in the case.

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¹¹ Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 2.13.

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 18**

2 Charts and Summaries Not Received in Evidence

3 Certain charts, summaries, and demonstrative diagrams and videos [may be]
4 [have been] shown to you in order to help explain the contents of books, records,
5 documents, or other evidence in the case. These demonstrative materials are only as
6 good as the underlying evidence that supports them. You should, therefore, give
7 them only such weight as you think the underlying evidence deserves.

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9 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 2.14
10 (modified).

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INSTRUCTION NO. 20

Evidence in Electronic Format

Those exhibits received in evidence that are capable of being displayed electronically will be provided to you in that form, and you will be able to view them in the jury room. A computer, projector, printer and accessory equipment will be available to you in the jury room.

8 A court technician will show you how to operate the computer and other
9 equipment; how to locate and view the exhibits on the computer; and how to print
10 the exhibits. You will also be provided with a paper list of all exhibits received in
11 evidence. You may request a paper copy of any exhibit received in evidence by
12 sending a note through the [clerk] [bailiff].) If you need additional equipment or
13 supplies or if you have questions about how to operate the computer or other
14 equipment, you may send a note to the [clerk] [bailiff], signed by your foreperson or
15 by one or more members of the jury. Do not refer to or discuss any exhibit you
16 were attempting to view.

17 If a technical problem or question requires hands-on maintenance or
18 instruction, a court technician may enter the jury room with [the clerk] [the bailiff]
19 present for the sole purpose of assuring that the only matter that is discussed is the
20 technical problem. When the court technician or any nonjuror is in the jury room,
21 the jury shall not deliberate. No juror may say anything to the court technician or
22 any nonjuror other than to describe the technical problem or to seek information
23 about operation of the equipment. Do not discuss any exhibit or any aspect of the
24 case.

25 The sole purpose of providing the computer in the jury room is to enable
26 jurors to view the exhibits received in evidence in this case. You may not use the
27 computer for any other purpose. At my direction, technicians have taken steps to
28 ensure that the computer does not permit access to the Internet or to any "outside"

1 website, database, directory, game, or other material. Do not attempt to alter the
2 computer to obtain access to such materials. If you discover that the computer
3 provides or allows access to such materials, you must inform the court immediately
4 and refrain from viewing such materials. Do not remove the computer or any
5 electronic data [disk] from the jury room, and do not copy any such data.

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7 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 2.16.

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 21**

2 Section 1983 Claim – Introductory Instruction

3 The plaintiffs bring their Fourth Amendment claim for excessive force under
4 the federal statute, 42 U.S.C. § 1983, which provides that any person or persons
5 who, under color of law, deprives another of any rights, privileges, or immunities
6 secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States shall be liable to the injured
7 party.

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9 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 9.1.

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INSTRUCTION NO. 32

Comparative Fault of Decedent

3 Defendant Officers claim that decedent Hector Puga's own negligence
4 contributed to his harm or death. To succeed on this claim, the Defendant Officer
5 must prove both of the following:

1. That Mr. Puga was negligent; and
2. That Mr. Puga's negligence was a substantial factor in causing his harm or death.

9 If the Defendant Officer proves the above, Plaintiffs' damages are reduced by
10 your determination of the percentage of Mr. Puga's responsibility. I will calculate
11 the actual reduction.

13 | Source: CACI 405, 407 (modified).

1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 34**

2 Vicarious Liability—Introduction

3 As to the plaintiffs' claims for battery, negligence and violation of the Bane
4 Act, the State of California, through the California Highway Patrol is responsible for
5 harm caused by the wrongful conduct of its employees while acting within the scope
6 of their employment. The parties have stipulated that Defendants Blackwood, Kee,
7 and Rubalcava were acting within the course and scope of their respective
8 employment with the California Highway Patrol at the time of the incident.

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10 Source: CACI 3700 (modified).

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 59**

2 Duty to Deliberate

3 Before you begin your deliberations, elect one member of the jury as your
4 presiding juror. The presiding juror will preside over the deliberations and speak for
5 the jury here in court.

6 You shall diligently strive to reach an agreement with all of the other jurors if
7 you can do so. Your verdict must be unanimous.

8 Each of you must decide the case for yourself, but you should do so only after
9 you have considered all of the evidence, discussed it fully with the other jurors, and
10 listened to their views.

11 It is important that you attempt to reach a unanimous verdict but, of course,
12 only if each of you can do so after having made your own conscientious decision.
13 Do not be unwilling to change your opinion if the disucssion persuades you that you
14 should. But do not come to a decision simply because other jurors think it is right, or
15 change an honest belief about the weight and effect of the evidence simply to reach
16 a verdict.

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18 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 3.1.

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 60**

2 Consideration of Evidence—Conduct of the Jury

3 Because you must base your verdict only on the evidence received in the case
4 and on these instructions, I remind you that you must not be exposed to any other
5 information about the case or to the issues it involves. Except for discussing the
6 case with your fellow jurors during your deliberations:

7 Do not communicate with anyone in any way and do not let anyone else
8 communicate with you in any way about the merits of the case or anything to do
9 with it. This includes discussing the case in person, in writing, by phone, tablet,
10 computer, or any other means, via email, via text messaging, or any internet chat
11 room, blog, website or application, including but not limited to Facebook, YouTube,
12 Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, TikTok, or any other forms of social media.
13 This applies to communicating with your family members, your employer, the
14 media or press, and the people involved in the trial. If you are asked or approached
15 in any way about your jury service or anything about this case, you must respond
16 that you have been ordered not to discuss the matter and to report the contact to the
17 court.

18 Do not read, watch, or listen to any news or media accounts or commentary
19 about the case or anything to do with it, although I have no information that there
20 will be news reports about this case; do not do any research, such as consulting
21 dictionaries, searching the Internet, or using other reference materials; and do not
22 make any investigation or in any other way try to learn about the case on your own.
23 Do not visit or view any place discussed in this case, and do not use Internet
24 programs or other devices to search for or view any place discussed during the trial.
25 Also, do not do any research about this case, the law, or the people involved—
26 including the parties, the witnesses or the lawyers—until you have been excused as
27 jurors. If you happen to read or hear anything touching on this case in the media,
28 turn away and report it to me as soon as possible.

1 These rules protect each party's right to have this case decided only on
2 evidence that has been presented here in court. Witnesses here in court take an oath
3 to tell the truth, and the accuracy of their testimony is tested through the trial
4 process. If you do any research or investigation outside the courtroom, or gain any
5 information through improper communications, then your verdict may be influenced
6 by inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information that has not been tested by the
7 trial process. Each of the parties is entitled to a fair trial by an impartial jury, and if
8 you decide the case based on information not presented in court, you will have
9 denied the parties a fair trial. Remember, you have taken an oath to follow the rules,
10 and it is very important that you follow these rules.

11 A juror who violates these restrictions jeopardizes the fairness of these
12 proceedings, and a mistrial could result that would require the entire trial process to
13 start over. If any juror is exposed to any outside information, please notify the court
14 immediately.

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16 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 3.2.

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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 61**

2 Communication with Court

3 If it becomes necessary during your deliberations to communicate with me,
4 you may send a note through the marshal, signed by your presiding juror or by one
5 or more members of the jury. No member of the jury should ever attempt to
6 communicate with me except by a signed writing; I will communicate with any
7 member of the jury on anything concerning the case only in writing, or here in open
8 court. If you send out a question, I will consult with the parties before answering it,
9 which may take some time. You may continue your deliberations while waiting for
10 the answer to any question. Remember that you are not to tell anyone—including
11 me—how the jury stands, numerically or otherwise, until after you have reached a
12 unanimous verdict or have been discharged.

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14 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 3.3.
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1 **INSTRUCTION NO. 62**

2 Return of Verdict

3 A verdict form has been prepared for you. [*Explain verdict form as needed.*]
4 After you have reached unanimous agreement on a verdict, your presiding juror
5 should complete the verdict form to your deliberations, sign and date it, and advise
6 the marshal that you are ready to return to the courtroom.

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8 Source: Ninth Circuit Manual of Model Jury Civil Instructions, No. 3.5.

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